

# Quid Novi

The Voice of Concordia University's School of Community and Public Affairs  
Winter Semester, 2001-2002

Editors: Mark Ordonselli & Malinka Lubenskyi  
Special Thanks to Ligia Pena

## **SCPASA Student Prez Can't Wait to Get the Hell Out of Here**

By: Mélissa Souris Larose

Most of the semester has gone Bye-Bye!

Hang in there! Only a few more weeks to go and it will be summer. I just wanted to let you know what was going on at the Students Association for this semester. As many of you might have seen, the resource center downstairs has changed since the beginning of the year - big thanx to the committee. More changes are to come too; there will be lamps on the tables and in the corner of the room, and also at the computers. We have subscribed to several magazines and we hope to continue to do so next year. There is also a trip to New York being planned and maybe to somewhere else as well - anybody interested in helping???. Finally, we would like to know what you think of the lounge (you know, the room with the phone!!). Write us your comments at [scpasa@hotmail.com](mailto:scpasa@hotmail.com). So that's that folks, if you have any questions, e-mail us and we'll answer you as quickly as we can. Have a good day!

Editor's note: Mel will not be running next year, so get your act together!!!

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Thursday, March 21 - SCPA Party**

Drop by McKibbin's Pub at 10 PM for good times and all the cheap drinks you can guzzle. There's a 5-dollar cover, but mixed drinks and domestic beers are 2 dollars all night. For every five dollars collected, 2 go to the SCPA and 1 goes to the Share the Warmth Foundation.

### **TBA - SCPA Student Association Elections**

The elections for next year's SCPA Student Association will be taking place soon. Five positions are open, and running so far are Molly Alexander, Mélissa Bellerose, Bryan Jetté, Anne-Marie Legault, Mark Ordonselli, and Mathieu Rioux. For more info, e-mail the student association at [scpasa@hotmail.com](mailto:scpasa@hotmail.com).

A joint Political Science-SCPA trip to New York has also been planned for the week immediately following the exam period. Although details have yet to be ironed out, the trip will likely cost 150\$

## Canadian Troops: Lovers, not Fighters

By Mark Ordonselli

If you've ever travelled outside this nation's seemingly limitless borders, you know that Canadians have an international reputation to uphold. As any seasoned canuck traveller will tell you, a crudely-sewn maple leaf on your backpack will all but guarantee you safe passage through most regions, a free lunch or two in the Netherlands, and according to a friend of mine, the intensely passionate affections of every girl in Australia.

So what have we done to earn the respect of so many, and the opportunity to contemplate koalas with Aussie vixens on the beach, under a brilliant Southern Cross? Why do customs agents the world over consistently curse us as "more damned Americans," only to relax and bid us a safe journey upon seeing our Canadian passports?

Well, one reason that comes to mind is that as a rule, we don't generally wander around the world blowing the hell out of things that don't belong to us. We lead campaigns against land mines, we don't use covert operations to overthrow governments, and our national character is about as menacing as a lima bean. Never, to my knowledge, has anyone ever screamed "Run for your lives! The Canadians are coming!" All that, however, may be changing this very moment.

According to Canadian vice-admiral Greg Maddison's press briefing on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 3,400 soldiers have taken part in the war in Afghanistan, dubbed Operation Apollo, to date. Six of our warships, with another 1,500 sailors on board, have scoured the Arabian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the North Arabian Sea in search of drug smugglers, bootleggers, and terrorists dogpaddling to New Zealand. We have a handful of spy-planes and transport aircraft dotting the Afghan sky, and a dozen Coyote armoured vehicles, equipped with all the latest toys and gadgets, roving the wilderness on the hunt for terror.

All this sounds very impressive, but it forces one to wonder exactly why a country

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## War On Terrorism - A Canadian Duty

By Malinka Lubenskyi

On September 11th, a group of people committed a series of terrible atrocities on North American soil - soil which, for the past century, had never born witness to such acts of warfare. Soil where most citizens have chosen peace as a way of life. Soil, where citizens of all nations and cultural beliefs dwell together in relative harmony. Soil where faith in the rule of law has been accepted in the interest of freedom and justice.

On September 11th, a group of people stole the freedom and lives of over 2000 individuals. Their devastating crimes brought new meanings to the phrase terrorist activity in North America. They coerced Americans, Canadians and others to take positions regarding those who engage in acts of this nature. For many Americans, the widespread support for the war on terrorism is a clear indication that these people and their activities are unwelcome in North America or anywhere in the world. Americans are ready to use their soldiers, weapons of war, and intelligence institutions to fight those behind the planning and execution of terrorist activity, those who harbour these individuals, and those who finance their missions. The Canadian Government has also decided in the past few months to express its position through support and co-operation with various initiatives to show that these types of activities are unacceptable. One of these initiatives is an aggressive military engagement on the part of Canadian soldiers.

This new combat role for our soldiers is indicative of the importance that the Canadian government has assigned to the issue of terrorism, and the risks it poses to its citizens. That we, peace-loving Canadians that we are, have chosen to expand our military role, just shows the world how much our society feels threatened by these types of actions and organizations, and how much we consider them to be unacceptable. Peacekeeping missions, whom our

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would spend enormous sums of money to dispatch thousands of its citizens halfway around the world, in order to wage a war in which it can make absolutely no difference whatsoever. If we're not there to provide vital, indispensable support to a flagging US army, then why do Canadians now find themselves in their first combat role since 1953? Why are we jeopardizing international admiration and Canadian lives - not to mention Australian romance - for an ineffective, unnecessary role in America's new war?

The answer, of course, is simple. When George W. Bush, the most powerful man in the world, calls for a show of support, and in one fell swoop classifies every human being on the planet as either an "us" or a "them," conventional wisdom dictates that his neighbours would be well-advised to smile and nod. This is especially true of his maple-syrup guzzling neighbours on the other side of what, until last fall, was the world's longest undefended border.

Canada clearly belongs on the "us" side of the debate on terrorism, but if that debate is to shift from demolishing skyscrapers to waging futile wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and likely several others, perhaps we should consider rejecting Bush's line in the sand, and toy with the idea of drawing a line of our own - one which separates the warring, bickering, gun-toting states of the world from those who would rather don blue helmets and dig up land mines. We could give it a truly Canadian name - The Beaver Line perhaps. Maybe we could build a wall.

Although I never thought I'd agree with anything that came out of Stockwell Day's mouth, I must admit that Canada's armed forces are woefully inadequate for pretty much any kind of fight involving more than slingshots and hurled insults, and I for one do not hesitate to proclaim that I am bloody well proud of that. Our military is pitiful because we don't fund it, because we don't *need* to fund it, and because Canada has reached the point where our army simply doesn't have to be a priority. We can afford to have a defence budget one fortieth the size of the American one because for 50 years, we haven't felt the need to go to war. We don't have a national military consciousness, as do our American friends. We don't even like guns, with only 5 per cent of Canadian households

Canadian soldiers are usually accustomed to, are no longer adequate in ensuring safety and security for our citizens and their way of life. We need our Canadian troops to defend those who lost their lives by doing what they can to capture and hold those accountable for bringing terror to our shores. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, many Canadians' levels of fear and insecurity rose as those planes came crashing down. The Canadian government is simply doing its job to ensure that safety is restored and that we do what is in our power to stop terror from reoccurring.

Our American neighbors, who are respectably different in many ways and at the same time hold similar values to our own, were hit very hard during those attacks. Among the victims were the sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters of over 2000 people, including 24 Canadians. Not only should we be bold enough to fight to avenge the lives of those Canadians that died unfairly but also to defend the thousands of others who perished, and who believed in a peaceful, enlightened way of life. These crimes not only killed thousands but also undermined their and our most fundamental rights to live our lives securely and free of the fears related to this type of terror. We needn't look very far to see and feel what it is like to live our lives in fear and uncertainty. Many nations' citizens live paralyzed in fear and suffer all their lives due to constant political turmoil. Life, being precious as it is, should be lived in security. This is why we, as a people, need to support, protect, and spread this most fundamental value, which is necessary for our prosperity and growth as human beings. We must choose not to live in fear. Instead, we must choose life and share its gifts.

While we may not always agree with some of the actions and positions of the United States, we are much like them: an open society ready to be challenged peacefully within its established system. The atrocities of September 11<sup>th</sup> were an attack on that system and its ideals. Individuals were ready to kill indiscriminately whoever happened to fall into their path of terror, regardless of race or religion. They

calls for revenge and a thirst for blood abound in a nation where almost a third of families are packing heat? Is theirs really a course we want to follow for the sake of political appearances and international bragging rights?

Canada, though certainly no utopia, has long struggled to emphasize its high moral ground and its independence from the United States. Our government's eagerness to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our massive Southern neighbours, against an enemy we cannot even define, puts both at risk. Not to mention those romantic nights in the Australian sand...

were ready to sacrifice their lives for their cause. The Canadian government had to ask itself if it was ready to do the same, and if the way of that these individuals are threatening is something that we Canadians feel is important? By involving Canadians in combat missions, the government decided it was our duty to stand by our neighbors and support those causes and actions that are within our power and means to support. We must not forget that open, diverse and just societies come at a price. That price is the risk that lives will be lost for the greater good and this is something we just have to accept!

## Propaganda as a Tool of the Media

**"In reality, to distinguish exactly between propaganda and information is impossible."**

- Jacques Ellul

Deterministic philosopher Jacques Ellul, describes propaganda as "an organized myth that takes over the whole person." In order to do this, it must be able to reach an individual on all levels and at all times to affect behaviour and actions. In the past century there have been massive technological developments in the media. This has greatly eased the work of propagandists because they now have access to their targeted population through the media. People have access to the media (or conversely, the media has access to people) at home, at work and during leisure time. No one is ever very far from the influence of the media.

It is my belief that being bombarded with information as we are in contemporary Western society will not lead to a decrease in the effectiveness of propaganda but rather an increase. "The broader and more objective the information, the more effective subsequent propaganda will be." I believe that being bombarded with information will not make people blasé and therefore less susceptible to propaganda but that it is a tool of propagandists *to make* people blasé and therefore *more* susceptible to propaganda. "[E]xcessive data do not enlighten the reader or the listener; they drown him." People who are constantly surrounded by excess information tend to feel powerless in face of so much information. Not only do they feel powerless but they also make simplistic judgments in order to categorize all the information they receive.

In a recent work, political scientist Robert Putnam, charted the decline of political involvement in the USA. Since the 1950s there has been a marked decrease in political participation at all levels in the USA. Though he does not attribute the decline to the increase in technological advances in media, I believe the link can be made. Too much information prevents people from thinking, from criticizing, or more precisely, from getting involved.

Too much information is not a solution to reducing the effectiveness of propaganda. To diminish its power, we need a strong civil society that people feel a part of. As Ellul puts it:

"An individual can be influenced by forces such as propaganda only when he is cut off from membership in local groups. Because such groups are organic and have a well-structured material, spiritual and emotional life, they are not easily penetrated by propaganda."

If individuals have webs of social solidarity that are strong and diverse they, will be more in touch with social reality. Ellul suggests that people with lots of personal contact with social reality are unlikely to fall under the influence of propaganda.

The question is then: will the new technologies of information and communication help or hinder the reduction of propaganda? It is my impression that information and communication technologies isolate people more than they bring them together. These technologies act, in effect, as a "middle man" between people. Though everyone has access to the media, most people interact with the media on an individual basis. The media, like propaganda, reaches out to the mass and the individual at the same time. There have been numerous references to television as a phenomenon that seemingly unites people but paradoxically keeps them apart. This goes to show that the sense of belonging embodied in television (and other forms of media) is often unreal. In fact, when one has a fabricated sense of community one is much more susceptible to propaganda. "The most favourable moment to seize a man and influence him is when he is alone in the mass. It is at this point that propaganda can be most effective." New technologies of information and communication give the semblance of creating social links and social reality but the community they create makes people all the more susceptible to propaganda.

Finally, control of the media and new technologies of communication are becoming more and more centralized within a few powerful corporations. Once the control of information is concentrated in the hands of a few, the likelihood of propaganda increases. "To make the organization of propaganda possible, the media must be concentrated, the number of news agencies reduced, the press brought under single control, and radio and film monopolies established."

The answer, then, on how to diminish the effectiveness of propaganda cannot, in my opinion, be found in new technologies of communication and media but rather as far away from them as possible. It is only in creating links with real people in real communities, that people are empowered against propaganda.

### Globalism, Tribalism, Democracy

#### A Response to Benjamin Barber's article "Jihad Vs. McWorld"

By Phoebe Baumgarten

Benjamin Barber strongly defines the political dialectic that we see shaping the world today in his article *Jihad vs. McWorld*. He identifies the two most prevalent tendencies of the world's political actors: globalism and tribalism. Both, Barber asserts, threaten democracy by overriding the individual and her rights. Ultimately, though, do these coincide or conflict with each other's and their own ends, and how does this interaction affect the possibility of the outcome resembling democracy?

Barber describes globalism as the

"globalisation of politics". This tendency is driven by four factors: the pervasive power of the market system, limited resources (oil), the increasing drive of information, and lastly, always last, the environment. That this last is still largely ignored, with the insolent nullification of treaties such as Canada's half-heartedly informal endorsement of Kyoto (arguably more indebted to public opinion rather than the sense of responsibility it attempts to project), is taken to which factor is considered the global priority. At a recent conference in Qatar, WTO secretary-general Michael Moore aptly described how the international market system demands universalization and entails societal homogenisation, a consequence of globalism, according to Barber: "Trade is a great unifying force, a force for peace, development and security. Our prosperity depends on the purchasing power and therefore the prosperity of others."

Tribalism is the reassertion of ancient systems of governance and governance of thought to counteract the above ideology. The members of a religious and/or ethnic community feel they must revert control back to that community. In short, democracy is rejected in favour of other more easily controlled forms of government, legitimized by more or less invented hatreds. It is hinged on a very strong local identity: the visceral satisfaction of belonging to a common end is an easy alternative of "McWorld's dully insistent imperatives". Barber ends his piece in concluding that democracy has shown itself resilient before, and will likely withstand both forces. He proposes they be reconciled by having open but locally and democratically controlled economies.

But to dismantle the dangers tribalism presents requires understanding what drives people to it: it fills a need for community that has been revoked by the sweeping unilateralism and uniformity of the new global community. Barber tends less to focus on this explanation of Jihad as a legitimate reaction: "... it is more often a reactionary and divisive force, pulverizing the very nations which it once helped to cement together." It may not be 'legitimate', true to justice as we conceive it to be here. What must be noted is that this rationale maintains that legitimacy cannot be a product of irrationally following the dictates of a sovereign ruler, however embodied. There is a misrepresentation of cultures that engage in Jihad as being guilty because they deny reason.

That they do so is plainly observable at times. But, the source of the error is not the contentiousness of rationalism in these communities; rather it comes in the assumption that the hungry and uneducated are as capable of pure rational thought as their better-fed brethren in the West. Whether those are to blame that believe in Jihad, simply because they are given nothing else to believe in and are well-acquainted with the inadequacy of their lifestyles as compared with ours, is the contentious issue. To what extent can the individual that follows this movement as all that can be made to make sense out of the cruel world, whether it be cruel or not, be held accountable?

Fundamentally, Jihad would not be present if there were no pressure from outside for territory and resources. Globalism is the manifestation of the West's 'need' to expand, to explore its boundaries. The mistake comes when the Western faith in the rational manifests itself on real borders, searching for the better good life, \*newly individually packaged for your personal paranoia. How the good life is defined is a matter of cultural difference: those proponents of globalization have no more a basic right to pursue happiness than do the Jihad warriors. McWorld is, however, a much more potent force: it holds the purchasing power of peace, after all. It has the power not only to alter mindsets, as can religious fundamentalism, but also to hold that mindset in place by placing the weight of the massive market system upon it.

In *The Unconscious Civilization*, John Ralston Saul states that:

"The acceptance of corporatism causes us to deny and undermine the legitimacy of the individual as citizen in a democracy. The result of such a denial is a growing imbalance which leads to our adoration of self-interest and our denial of the public good."

Translated into global terms, the same rules apply: our adoration of our superior standard of living and other products of such relativist reasoning has led to our patronization of other ways of life. *Qui tacet consentet*—by our support, we have allowed ourselves to impinge upon others; and then blame them for not wanting to comply. Homogenisation not only threatens ways of life, but also presents the danger of provoking unpleasant and bloody reactions from pockets of cultures that have managed to remain in isolation.

As the U.S. dropped bombs in Afghanistan, it dropped humanitarian aid; though certainly with international and electoral relations in mind, food still reached starving people. Hypocrisies continue, but they are ebbing away with a new potential people have recognized in themselves. Americans were targeted, yet they try to remain open-minded about the people of the world, or at least, this is what the popular media portrays, which is

almost as large a step in the right direction. Globalism may hold more potential for democracy, in being clothed in the mantle of freedom, and when consumers refuse to give up the luxury of slumber, tribalism resorts to shaking them out of it. The means used by tribalism to communicate its point are of the few means that globalism refrains from admitting it uses itself.

Thus, the dynamic present in today's political world will not allow for the complete domination of global forces, and all because of public image, which must be upheld to guarantee civilian support. That democracy will prevail is more than likely: we have achieved a certain plane of self-awareness, from which it is much too late to turn back.

## **The Hidden Dynamic Behind the Civil Rights Movement: The Economics of Racism**

By Christopher Skeete

One day at work on my lunch break as I sat eating the awesome fajitas my lovely partner had prepared for me; I began to think of the 1960's - specifically the civil rights movement. This thought, perhaps triggered by the recent birth of my nephew on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2002 and proudly named Malcolm X Skeete, (X for Xavier), led me to question the sudden quasi-acceptance of persons of African Decent. Recalling that it has been many years since I was last called the "N" word, I wondered whether this was due to my age or a cultural shift within society. As I continued eagerly ingesting my extremely tasty lunch and philosophising the anthropological phenomenon at hand, I thought of the many things I have learned in my first year of university: notably, the neo-liberal tendencies of government and corporations since the 1980's. Following this thought, my very active imagination led me to question, as I often do, the status quo.

It struck me then that the slow turn from complete racism and segregation, which peaked in the 50's and 60's and subsequently halted and reversed in the late 60's and early 70's, coincided with the economic peak of the so-called "Golden Age". Biting into my last fajitas, I realised then that the turnaround was due mostly to changing views that were seeded in the roaring 60's. However, there was a hidden dynamic that I feel was also at play. The capitalists, seeing the "beginning of the end" for their already stagnant profit margins, fuelled this dynamic. They began to realise, as Dr. Salée so aptly put it, that "there are only so many refrigerators (or other commodities) one can buy". The capitalist, always eager to make profit, saw an untapped population, with limited commodities and potentially awesome purchasing power. This population rightfully identified as African Americans and other non-whites was allowed by these insatiable capitalists to be introduced into the workforce of the market system and ultimately contributed substantially to the generation of profit.

The acceptance of these people into the economy inevitably led to their acceptance in regular spheres of everyday life. As these populations were awarded more flexibility and financial clout, they gained increased acceptance, or tolerance as the case may be, within society, and so began the age of "tolerance". With this new-found purchasing power, non-whites, paternalistically allowed into the workforce by gluttonous capitalists, in the end helped fuel the faltering economic system and softened the blow of the permanent recession we still face today.

Without negating the contribution of civil rights leaders and their triumphant contribution, it is important to note also that the oppression that existed was, quite simply, bad for business. Northern economists knew this fact during the American civil war and they knew it all the more in the late 1960's.

For their part, the capitalists could no longer *afford* to be discriminatory in practise and predictably chose riches over their doctrine of racism.

### **What is Private in the Twenty-First Century?**

A panel of experts, including lawyer Julius Grey, will discuss the limits to privacy in this, the age of information. The panel discussion will take place at 6 PM on Tuesday, March 26, in the faculty club lounge in the Hall Building. A reception will follow at the SCPA building.

## Canadian Warship Seizes Tanker in... Wait... Canada has a Warship?

**Arabian Sea** — Canadian television reported Friday that a Canadian warship in the Arabian Sea had seized a tanker suspected of smuggling oil from Iraq, leading many to suspect that the report was a hoax.

"You're kidding, right? Canada has a warship?" asked U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. "Like for war?"

"Does Canada know?" he added.

"Nobody was more stunned than we were," said Kali Omari, first mate of the seized vessel. "We saw this frigate steaming toward us, and we were worried, but then we saw the maple leaf on the flag, and we thought, 'Oh, Canadians. What the hell do they want?'"

When an officer of the HMCS Vancouver announced that the tanker was about to be boarded, the crew of the detained ship was confused, said Omari, but their confusion quickly turned to anger when they saw what the Canadians sailors were carrying.

"They were armed. With guns," said Omari. "Canadians. With guns. And a warship. What is this world coming to?"

"They were pretty rude, too," Omari added. "They started asking us all sorts of questions, like 'Where did that oil come from?' But first we wanted to know who gave them the damn warship."

According to Canadian defense officials, the Vancouver is one of four frigates deployed in the region to assist in the U.S.-led Afghanistan conflict. The tanker was stopped, officials said, because its cargo of crude oil violated United Nations sanctions, which prohibit Iraq from selling oil unless in exchange for food and medicine.

The U.N. said the incident is already under investigation, and promised swift action against those found responsible for giving the Canadians guns. Initial findings indicate that the Vancouver crew may have been watching too many American television shows.

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## Enron Admits it's Really Argentina

Now Massive Ineptitude, Corruption Make More Sense, Analysts Say

**Houston, Texas** — Collapsed due to gross mismanagement and insurmountable debt, energy company Enron today confessed to what many observers had long suspected: it is actually Argentina.

Congressional leaders, who have called for an investigation into the biggest corporate failure in U.S. history, immediately dismissed Enron's claim, but Argentinians weren't so sure. "The shady deals. The crazy debt. I knew there was something familiar about those guys," said Banco de Argentina director Ernesto Caballo.

Enron chairman and CEO Kenneth Lay, speaking through an interpreter via phone from Buenos Aires, apologized for any confusion the subterfuge may have caused, and noted that as a sovereign nation, the company was immune from U.S. prosecution. Lay also insisted that he had not "fled" to Argentina, but had returned home to the capital to visit "mi familia."

While not directly stating it, Lay also hinted that he might in fact be Argentinian President Fernando de la Rua. Reached in Buenos Aires, de la Rua admitted he couldn't rule that out. "Things are pretty crazy around here. Who can say?"

But Enron creditors, clients, and shareholders, who stand to lose billions over their exposure to the company, weren't buying any of it. "While they may act like it, they are not a South American country, and Ken Lay is not the President of Argentina," declared J.P. Morgan Chase spokesman Alex Firtilly. "They are a malfeasant U.S. corporation that has potentially caused us to lose \$500 million. And Ken Lay is from Missouri."

"¿Como?," Lay replied. "No hablo Ingles."

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## The SCPA: Where Do We Stand

By Melanie Anestis  
*CSU Council Representative for Arts and Science*

Over the past school year there has been an increasing amount of talk about electoral representation and the CSU. We have already lived through one election and are now in another election period. With the whirlwind of campaign promises swirling around us, one question comes to mind: why is this important to SCPA students? In the alphabet soup of organizations representing Concordia students, maybe there needs to be a clarification of where the SCPA fits in this world of politics:

The most overarching representative body of students is the CSU. Accredited last year, the Concordia Student Union is the formal voice of all students to the outside world and towards the University Administration.

**CSU Executive:** The visible body of the CSU. The Executive is the coordinating team that shapes CSU policy. The President, as of last year, runs on a slate and platform that determines the CSU Executive.

**CSU Council:** Where the true power lies, this is the approval body for executive decisions. There are a total of 32 seats representing all faculties: Arts and Science, Engineering, Commerce, and Fine Arts.

The next level of representation within the university is ASFA, the Arts and Science Federation of Associations. This organization represents the Faculty of Arts and Science, (29 department associations), and seeks to provide services such as orientation and the support of departmental associations.

Finally, the closest level of representation for us as SCPA students is the School of Community and Public Affairs Student Association, our departmental association that has provided such resources as the computers and research materials downstairs.

If you want to effect changes, get involved at any of these levels. Take it from me - it's a great learning experience and loads of fun, at least most of the time.

## Can We Survive Another Election?

By Luis Diaz

The situation in Concordia University is hot!!! As the school prepares itself for another election, I ask myself the question: can the school handle another election??? If this comment might seem familiar to some of us, especially those in the SCPA, then let us remember a panel that was done on September 30, 1992. The problem within our university, as the panel noted, is that two factions exist, each looking in opposite directions. Yes, I may be generalizing, but if you look at it, we all have a friend in university that is fighting to solve some problem or other within our society and another that just does not care about anything and wants to finish their studies. This is a problem in such a socially involved institution as Concordia University.

As we await the elections on the 26th, 27th, and 28th, of March, the entire educational community holds its breath in anticipation of yet another scandal within the school. The Dean of Students and the Quebec Ministry of Education are looking on. Hey! Wait a minute! We also want to show other universities that Concordia can and will overcome its problems. WHAT PROB-

LEMS??? The fact that we cannot rally together to come to a consensus of what we want for our school? The fact that we have “radicals” protesting? Well, those are our rights within a democracy. But are we taking them to an extreme? In times post 9/11, where everything is anti-conflict and anti-terror, is there room for politics and social statements “à la Concordia”? We are slowly isolating ourselves from the rest of the educational system as we constantly make problems bigger than life.

Do not get me wrong; I do believe in Kyoto and democracy by the people, to the people and for the people. However, when we only do that and not what is meant to be done in our university, (i.e. studying), then what is the point of going to school? I myself am sick and tired of coming to school and seeing the same problems over and over again.

I am going to vote next week. For whom am I going to vote? That, I do not know. This time around, the elections are not about the “Left” vs. the “Right”. There is much more riding on them than school politics, and the sides are not clearly defined. We have leftovers from past elections and rookies who have come to step into the limelight, people with tumultuous pasts within the university and people who just have no clue what the real issues are. With “The Usual Suspects” (no pun intended...really!!) showing up on both sides of the spectrum this time, what is the unexperienced (or experienced) voter to do?

I guess all I can say to the general public is that we need more people that are active in student life, but no one wants to participate. From experience, I can tell you that democracy does NOT work with less than 10% of the population voting. If you don’t like your choices, then do something about it. Many of us are willing to let it all go and just look to graduation, when we won’t have to worry about student politics anymore. Do you want to know what is the scariest thing of all? We are all of voting age in the “real world.” Check the numbers on the last federal and provincial voter turnouts. The future of Canadian and Quebec politics rest upon the shoulders of Concordia. How’s that for motivation!!!

# CONGRATS TO THE GRADUATES OF 2002!!!

Tamara Achtman  
Melanie Anestis  
Jacqueline Grant  
Vartan Soolakian  
Julie Taylor  
Danielle Carbonneau  
Carolina Bravo

Sheila Narrainen  
Namosha Boykin  
Cynthia Jones  
Julie Thiebaud  
Lisa Gallinaro  
Melissa Duncan  
Stephanie Primeau

We apologize if we missed anyone.